

### **Pawtuckaway Lake Improvement Association Gets LRAC Grant to Help Find and Remove Invasive Variable Milfoil**

Variable milfoil is an aggressive, invasive freshwater plant that is fouling New England's lakes and ponds. It spreads rapidly both by seeds and by rooting of pieces that break off from the parent plant. Unlike native species of milfoil that grow slowly and don't get tall, this plant is fast-growing and can reach 15 feet in height. No local animals eat it and it can quickly take over and crowd out native plants. When it dies back at the end of the growing season, it decays, resulting in murky water and a foul odor. This plant is an enemy to clean water, good fishing, and swimming.



*variable milfoil stem and cross section*

The Pawtuckaway Lake Improvement Association has been working hard for years to contain and remove variable milfoil from the lake. It has been a difficult process, but so far they have succeeded in keeping the infestation at a very low level. Human divers look for the plants under water, which is difficult with low visibility and moving water.

If plants are found, the diver returns to the surface to gather flags to mark the spot, but finding the plant again can be difficult. Removing the plants cannot be done by untrained amateurs; each plant must be removed carefully so that the plant remains as intact as possible and any pieces that break off must be captured. The process is labor intensive and time consuming. Underwater visual surveillance is not possible for the entire lake using divers alone.

The dedicated group of lake volunteers applied for a grant that will pay for side-scan sonar and the associated software. The equipment will allow the detection team to scan large areas of the lake from the surface quickly and accurately, including areas that were impossible to assess until now. For side-scan sonar, detecting variable milfoil is like looking for trees on a grassland... easy! The greatly improved detection will facilitate removal. Water from the lake is routinely released to the Lamprey River through two dams. Better control of the milfoil in the lake will greatly improve the chances that the Lamprey River will remain free of this nuisance plant. We are happy to help our partners in protecting clean water, resilient ecology, and enjoyable water-based recreation.

Please do your part to help prevent the spread of variable milfoil. Avoid disturbing areas that are known to have variable milfoil, so that you don't cause fragments to break off

and migrate to new sites. Assume that any pond, lake, or river impoundment could have variable milfoil (or other invasive plants) and make sure ALL plant fragments are removed from boat propellers, paddles, fishing gear, etc. anytime you exit the water.

**David Carroll: Naturalist, Artist, Author, You Tube Star**

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| <p>The LRAC is pleased to announce the release of two new videos featuring New Hampshire's David Carroll as he shares his insights and hopes for the Lamprey River.</p> |  <p>Photo courtesy of <a href="https://carrollartgallery.com">https://carrollartgallery.com</a></p> |
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In the first video, ***David Carroll: A Life with Turtles***, he reflects on his career in art and writing. Turtles are central to his story and inspire his advocacy for the protection of wild places that should be kept wild. View the video at <https://youtu.be/DAWgQnAnJXg>

In ***Beyond Conservation to Preservation***, he uses wood turtles as a way to show that the land that is the most valuable and in need of protection can also be the most complex. Much of the Lamprey River is especially suited to wood turtles and other species that rely on floodplains. He stresses that conserved land should not always become “open space” for human recreation. View the video at <https://youtu.be/HIIB7CObDWw>

These videos join the LRAC's line-up of Lamprey River topics. Other titles can be found at [www.LampreyRiver.org](http://www.LampreyRiver.org) under the videos tab.

**Underground Concerns in the Age of COVID 19**

Since mid-March, most of us have become accustomed to the new routines of life with COVID 19. We know the importance of social distancing, wearing masks in public places, washing our hands frequently, and that cleanliness is more important than ever.

But have our septic systems heard the news or read the guidelines? Most of us who live on the Lamprey River have septic systems at home to treat our domestic sewage. Septic systems need to have bacteria to function properly. Septic system bacteria can be killed by bleach and other sanitizing chemicals. The whole system can be clogged by “disposable” or “flushable” wipes and materials that do not break down easily. With or without COVID 19, septic systems are only capable of treating water, bodily waste, and toilet paper.

Nobody wants to replace a failing septic system. So what can we do to prevent that?

- Go old school. Most surfaces can be cleaned well with plain soap and water.
- Use bleach sparingly. Where sanitizing is essential, clean the surface first with soap and water and then use a disposable wipe or cloth. Dispose of the wipe in the trash.
- Use less toxic chemicals such as 70% rubbing alcohol or hydrogen peroxide; these break down into harmless chemicals. The EPA and CDC websites have lists of acceptable bleach substitutes.
- If we face another toilet paper shortage, use what's available to wipe, but do not flush it; instead, bag it and dispose of it in the trash.
- Follow the usual guidelines to keep your septic system working well:
  - Inspect and pump every 2-3 years.
  - Don't overwhelm the system with too much water at one time. Spread laundry loads out over the week. Don't empty hot tubs all at once.
  - Keep cars and other vehicles off the leach field.
  - Make sure only water, body waste, and toilet paper go to the septic system. Dispose of food waste and grease in the garbage. Dispose of medicine at your local drug collection site (pharmacy, police, etc.).
- Even if you don't have a septic system, the same rules apply for those on municipal sewers.

For more suggestions about septic system care, <https://getpumpednh.com/> has lots of useful information.

### **Small but Mighty: The Lamprey River Preserve Expands**

(Excerpts from a press release from The Nature Conservancy, June 8, 2020)



*An important natural area along the Lamprey River in Durham will be expanded, providing clean water, enhancing recreational opportunities and connecting wildlife in a part of the state that is facing increasing development pressure.*

The 10-acre parcel featuring a third of a mile of frontage along the Lamprey River was recently acquired by The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire from long-time

Durham resident and local conservationist Richard Lord. The parcel will become part of TNC's popular 235-acre Lamprey River Preserve, which is one of the largest, undeveloped tracts of land along the river and includes more than two miles of meandering river frontage. "While this 10-acre acquisition may appear small, its significance and impact far outweigh its size," said Patrick Hackley, TNC's associate director for land protection.

While there are no formal trails on TNC's Lamprey River Preserve, there is an unmaintained farm road that leads from the parking area on Packers Falls Road to the river. The farm road passes through a large open field where visitors can enjoy watching grassland birds. (Due to nesting birds, visitors are encouraged not to walk through the fields during spring and summer, but many birds can be seen from the farm road.) The best way to enjoy the shoreline is by canoe.

The acquisition was made possible with funding from the NH Department of Environmental Services Aquatic Resources Mitigation Program, the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program, the Lamprey River Advisory Committee, the Great Bay Resource Partnership, the Lewis Foundation and generous local donors.

## **Out and About along the Lamprey River**

In this summer of social distancing, you can still have a great time outside. The LRAC's recreation map includes scenic vistas, historical sites, paddling access points, and even a suggested bicycling path. The map can be found at [https://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/LampreyTourMap\\_page\\_1.pdf](https://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/LampreyTourMap_page_1.pdf) and the companion guide can be found at <https://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/LampreyTourGuide.pdf>.

If you like to paddle, we have created a family-friendly scavenger hunt, available at [https://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/paddling\\_scavenger\\_hunt\\_&\\_fun\\_facts.pdf](https://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/paddling_scavenger_hunt_&_fun_facts.pdf).

We have provided copies of the maps and scavenger hunt to local libraries where possible and we hope you will be able to pick up copies there. If you are not able to find a copy, please email [info@lampreyriver.org](mailto:info@lampreyriver.org) and we will mail it to you.

Have fun, be safe, and please do your part to help others stay safe, too.